Start of Fini Littlejohn Collection

AR 11667

Sys #: 000352137

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AR 11667 1/1 Fini Littlejohn Collection 1914-2004 Archives

AHC 1549

1549

It took me a long time to get over that

FINI LITTLEJOHN

Schauspielerin, Illustratorin, Animationszeichnerin

Geboren als Josephine Rüdiger am 25. November 1914 in Wien. Studium an der Kunstgewerbeschule bei Albert Paris Gütersloh. Durch Ausstattungsarbeiten kam sie in Verbindung zur Wiener Theaterszene, wo sie ihr Bühnentalent entdeckte. Spielte ab 1933 am Theater in der Scala, am Volkstheater und an Wiener Kleinkunstbühnen (Der liebe Augustin, Literatur am Naschmarkt). Nebenrolle in Willi Forsts Film "Maskerade". Bis 1936 Theaterarbeit mit Rudolf Beer und Eugen Schulz-Breiden in Wien und Zürich. 1937 mußte sie ihre Karriere abbrechen und flüchtete mit einer Zwischenstation in Kuba nach New York. Dort zunächst Ausstatterin von Schaufenstern für Kaufhäuser wie "Saks" und "Bloomingdale". 1939 ging sie nach Hollywood, wo sie 1940/41 im Character Model Department der Disney-Studios Zeichentrickfiguren für "Dumbo", "Pinocchio", "Peter Pan" und "Cinderella" entwickelte. 1943 Heirat mit dem Animationszeichner William Littlejohn. Daneben weiter Schaufensterdesign, Innenarchitektin. Illustration von Kinderbüchern unter dem Pseudonym Fini ("First Nursery Songs". Garden City 1945; "The Seven Little Elephants". New York 1947). In den 60er Jahren engagierte sie sich in dem von J. F. Kennedy ins Leben gerufenen "Head Start Program" für sozial benachteiligte Kinder. 1984 Organisatorin des internationalen Trickfilmwettbewerbs "Olympiad of Animation" im Rahmen der Olympischen Spiele in Los Angeles. Sie lebt in Malibu, Kalifornien.

Abbildung: Umschlag ihres zweiten Buches, 1947

A GREAT PROJECT, GOODLUCK!

FINI WITTLESOHN / LEO GLUECKSELIG (AUSTR. KULTUR)
I STUDIED AT KUNSTGEWERBESCH + LEFT VIENNA IN
1937 for the US, NICE ROLE IN MASKERADE "Left before ENGAGEMENTS
WERE NOT POSSIBLE, WRONG" ANCESTORS. DON'T KNOW
ANYONE ELSE, MAYBE GEORGE KAPLAN. INTERMEDIA-
WAS HUSBAND OF VERA UNTIL SHE DIED —
ALSO ACI LAMM S. AMERICA. I DID WINDOW
BACKGROUNDS, WAS ART DIRECTOR AT LANZ of
SALZBURG + WORKED AT DISNEY, NO ACTING
TO MY SORROW

LEO BAECK INSTITUTE

for the study of the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry

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THE AUSTRIAN HERITAGE COLLECTION AT THE LEO BAECK INSTITUTE
AUSTRIAN-JEWISH IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA

Dear ~~Mr.~~/Ms. LIESL JOHN

The Leo Baeck Institute, New York, is the foremost research center for the history of German-speaking Jewry. Since 1955, the Leo Baeck Institute has been collecting books, documents, photos, diaries, papers, letters and other material that help preserve the record of the life of German-speaking Jewry.

Your story is a very important part of the historical record and the essential basis for research in the fields of history, genealogy and sociology. When you had to leave Austria or a state of the former Habsburg Monarchy, did you bring personal items with you that give testimony to your life there, such as letters, photos, diaries or official documents? Do you have material relating to your experiences during the process of emigration and exile?

The Leo Baeck Institute, in cooperation with the Austrian Cultural Institute New York and the Austrian Gedenkdienst, is collecting this documentation in order to catalogue and maintain this precious legacy for generations to come. The aim of the project is to document the history of Jews from Austria or the former Habsburg Monarchy who were persecuted and forced to leave the country by the Nazis. Materials gathered in this project - documents, questionnaires and oral history interviews - will serve as a resource for future scholarly research.

We encourage you to contribute to this project. We kindly ask you to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us in the enclosed self-addressed and stamped envelope. If you need more space to answer the questions, please feel free to attach additional pages.

For further information please contact Sebastian Markt or Roland Winkler at the Leo Baeck Institute. Tel: 212-744 6400 --- Fax: 212-988 1305

Thank you very much for participating in this project!

Mail to: Leo Baeck Institute
Austrian Heritage Collection
15 West 16th Street
New York, NY 10011

Dr. Frank Mecklenburg
Chief-Archivist and Director of Research

1.6 Did you or your family encounter any anti-Semitism before March 1938? (If so, please give details.)

[illegible] in [illegible] Role

[illegible] 1934-35, [illegible] the wrong

[illegible] no desire

[illegible] I went to Lessing-Schule in Berlin in 1933 (1934)

+ a teacher named Feiler? made Nazi remarks in his class

lectures + favored Nazi children 13 yrs. old girls -

1.7 What was your (or your parents') reaction to Hitler's rise to power in Germany in 1933 and to Nazi activity in Austria in the early thirties? Did you or your parents feel threatened by these events?

yes

Comic cards obtained from Helmut G. Asper -

who wrote about the people in the pictures on them -

drawings pictures of 18 yrs. old Rolf in Mostrade

Rolf Ehrhardt G. Asper

Arabidest Ehrhardt Bielefeld G.

Tel: 33739

Also

My friend Ruth Manton (Mathesius)

gave me papers to use

2. FROM MARCH 1938 TO EMIGRATION - FROM EUROPE TO AMERICA

2.1 How was your time spent during and after the "Anschluss"? What was the impact of the "Anschluss" on you personally?
(Were you expelled from school/university? Did you or your parents lose your jobs? Were your apartments/houses looted? Were you (or members of your family) persecuted? Were you forced to scrub the streets?) My father was

2.2 How did non-Jewish friends, colleagues, schoolmates, neighbors, etc. behave toward you and your family? They were very friendly -

2.3 Do you have any recollections of November 9th, 1938, the so-called "Reichs-Kristallnacht"? (If so, please give details.)

2.4 Were you or any members of your family arrested? Sent to a camp? (If so, please give details.)

I worked as an intern (first indigent) at these same institutions among my fellow artists, but nothing overt.

2.5 Can you recall the process of obtaining papers necessary for emigration? (Did you try to obtain visas for other countries as well? Were you supported by any relief organization, by relatives or friends?)

My uncle, Louis Vogelbaum, apparently left prior to Hitler. Jewish Organization + they helped me + go to Cuba. I filled out the necessary papers - My cousin address was 405 S. Orange, N. J. He had a Wisconsin Cheese business + we thought of him as the Rich Uncle. He brought several brothers and cousins + families to USA and put them in business

P.S. I'm sorry to be late with filling the questionnaires, I was quite ill (flu + sinus) it was a question of balance, but I walk with a stick —

2.6 What happened to your (or your family's) apartments, houses, businesses and other property?

2.7 When did you leave Austria? (Please indicate exact date, if possible)

2.8 If you did not emigrate directly to the U.S, where did you go first?
(How long did you stay there? Can you give a brief description of your experiences? Why did you leave?)

3. THE UNITED STATES

3.1 When did you arrive in the U.S.? (Please indicate exact date, if possible)

JAN. 1937

3.2 Did members of your family emigrate to countries other than the U.S.?
(If so, where? Where do they live today? Are you still in contact with them?)

they left vienna (yes Tash

3.3 Did you serve in the U.S. Armed Forces or in any other allied army?
(If so, when did you join? What division? What was your area of operation? When were you discharged?)

3.4 Please list places and dates of residence in the U.S.
(City, State; in bigger cities, neighborhood)

3.5 Please describe your occupational situation from your arrival in the U.S. to the present.

3.6 Did you belong to any emigrant/immigrant-related organization or cultural association? (e.g. Austrian American Federation, Austrian Forum, etc.? If so, since when? Do you still belong to any of them?)

End of Fini Littlejohn Collection